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RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE

RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE

RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001338

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR A/S CARSON AND USSES
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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TAGS: KCRM PGOV PINS PREL SU

SUBJECT: SE GRATION WITH NCP MINISTER AMIN ON ABYEI, DOHA
AND DARFUR

Classified By: CDA Robert Whitehead, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶11. (C) Summary: On November 22, US Special Envoy to Sudan (SE) Scott Gration met with Dr. Amin Hassan Omar, Government of National Unity (GoNU) State Minister of Youth, Sport and Culture and the National Congress Party (NCP) lead on the Doha talks. Amin insisted that issues surrounding Abyei are highly complex and require more time to resolve, and he indicated that the NCP would not budge from its insistence on comprehensive Misseriya representation in Abyei. Amin was upbeat on the recent Darfur civil society meetings in Doha, and said that JEM's position has softened, but he thought it unlikely that Abdul Wahid would travel to Doha anytime soon. Amin was supportive of SE Gration's ideas to bring security and peace to Darfur, and offered to pass along Gration's suggestions to NCP insiders. End summary.

¶12. (C) An NCP hardliner, Dr. Amin was not optimistic that the Abyei residency requirement issue would reach resolution anytime soon. "I don't think that the other issues are difficult, but we need more time on this," he said. "We have been pushing resolution of Abyei since Naivasha." Amin said that he could personally agree that Misseriya nomads need to live eight to nine months in Abyei to count as residents, and therefore participate in the Abyei referendum, but he cautioned that other players in the NCP may feel differently.

Still, Amin hewed closely to the party line that Misseriya must be fully represented in the Abyei referendum. "You cannot disenfranchise people because of their style of life," Amin warned. "If they're paying taxes there, then they have political rights, including the right to vote." Amin said that the issue needed to be taken to the presidential level, but he added that emissaries must come bearing "concrete ideas" aimed at resolving the stand-off.

¶13. (C) The lead GoNU negotiator at the Doha talks in early 2009 between the GOS and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), Amin called the latest round of talks in Doha "useful and productive." Following his meetings with JEM, Amin said he believed that JEM's position had softened and Khalil Ibrahim is now serious about engaging with the GOS. However, JEM continues to maintain that other Darfuri rebel movements, including Sudan Liberation Army/Abdul Wahid (SLA/AW) faction, are not legitimate and should not be invited to participate in future talks. Amin does not believe that UN-AU Joint Mediator Djibril Bassole will manage to convince Abdul Wahid to travel to Doha to participate in peace talks, and he said that future negotiations on peace in Darfur may need to move to another neutral site, such as Senegal. SE Gration pressed Amin to address the issue of Chadian Armed Opposition Groups (CAOGs) in Darfur, but Amin said that CAOGs need to engage in dialogue with the regime of Chadian President Idris Deby. "Demobilizing them won't work," Amin suggested. "They have

real grievances with Deby."

¶4. (C) SE Gration explained to Amin that overall insecurity in Darfur remains an acute problem, and stands apart from the issue of GOS-rebel dynamics. Amin denied that the GOS controls violent janjaweed militias, and said they remain entirely autonomous. "We are ready to fight them," he pledged, "because we consider them as criminals as well." SE Gration discussed the issue of communal policing within the IDP camps, and Amin suggested that on his next visit, SE Gration speak directly to the GOS Ministry of the Interior, the body responsible for police oversight. Amin offered his support for the idea, and said it would improve security by taking advantage of the natural kinship networks within the camps. Amin speculated that senior NCP leaders will support the idea, but that various policing agencies might object because of what he termed "the dignity of the police."

¶5. (C) Comment: A hyper-intelligent political scientist and policy hardliner, Amin supports dialogue with the international community but remains a fierce NCP loyalist. His insistence that the Misseriya fully participate in the Abyei referendum reflects NCP consistency across the board on this point and indicates how difficult it will be to resolve this issue. As he noted, the NCP and Sudanese People's Liberation Movement have had years to deal with the issue but have never veered from their respective obdurate stances, ergo the current impasse. In Darfur, Amin will likely continue to pursue a deal with JEM, but it is unclear if his mention of JEM "softening" accurately reflects conditions on the ground, or is simply NCP messaging. Why Dakar would be preferable to Doha, Tripoli or some other site eludes us,

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although moving talks to Francophone Senegal might help the French convince the elusive, Paris-based Abdul Wahid to come to the table. End comment.

WHITEHEAD